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ABSTRACT

This practicum applies a modern systems approach to field work instruction. It is an experiment with an innovation in field teaching that addresses itself to three major problems that have been identified by social work educators. These are (1) integrating classroom and field work instruction; (2) providing an equal opportunity for basic field learning for all students; (3) promoting increased independence for the student in learning. The systems approach was implemented in this investigation by developing and evaluating a self-contained unit of instruction for field supervisors and their students. In this manner, field work was conceptualized as a course for which behavioral objectives could be defined, content selected, learning opportunities planned, and student learning assessed. The results of this study are that a modern systems approach to social work field instruction is (1) extremely effective in augmenting student learning and (2) a valuable tool for alleviating educational problems inherent in field instruction. These findings suggest that graduate social work education would be more effective if modern educational principles and methods were utilized in teaching students in agency placement. The module evaluation and a self-instructional unit are included in the appendix. (Author/PG)

ED104305

# EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A MODERN SYSTEMS APPROACH TO FIELD INSTRUCTION IN GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT MODULE

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## INTRODUCTION

This practicum has been designed to introduce and evaluate a systematic approach to social work field instruction. It is based on the belief that it is valid to utilize modern educational principles and methods in teaching social work students in their agency placements. This investigation utilizes new instructional technology to assist field teachers in disciplining and structuring their knowledge so that students can learn more effectively.

An approach to social work field instruction is proposed in which field work is conceptualized as a course for which behavioral objectives can be defined, content selected, learning opportunities planned, and student learning assessed. The intent of this study is to improve the quality of field instruction as an important component of social work education.

## BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

In order to understand the reason this investigation has been undertaken, it is necessary to have some understanding of the present structure of social work field instruction. It is universally accepted by schools of social work that their students need practical experience as well as didactic study to enable them to achieve competence in their profession. To gain this experience, each student spends a certain amount of time in a social work agency where he is guided by a field work instructor (also referred to in this paper as supervisor, field instructor, field work teacher) to whom he is responsible. The minimum requirements for field instructors at Barry College are the Master of Social Work degree and membership in the Academy of Certified Social Workers.

The Barry College School of Social Work places students in selected social agencies where they spend two days a week during their first year of study and three days a week during their second year. The student spends the other days of the week in the classroom and library, thus being provided with theory and practice as a concurrent experience.[1]

The purpose of field instruction is to help students integrate theory with practice in order to develop appropriate skill, knowledge, attitude and professional identification. The student's supervisor teaches him in the field work agency through helping him to look at the interaction between himself, his clients, his agency, and the community, and also to better understand theory and its assimilation into practice.[2]

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A review of pertinent literature shows that at the present time students are placed in agencies to be taught in any way the individual supervisor thinks is best.[3] The student-supervisor relationship is essentially tutorial in nature. Content is generally transmitted from the instructor to the student within the framework of a one-to-one educational relationship. The field work teacher is inferred to be competent in her skills and knowledge and she is independent in selection of content and assignments to the student.[4] Generally, a small number of carefully chosen cases is entrusted to the student after consultation. The student then records his own account of interviews which form the basis of educational discussions with his supervisor, to which regular weekly time is given. There is no organized development of curriculum and the field instructor teaches whatever method and content she deems appropriate at the time.

It is clear that many field work supervisors bear a heavy load of anxiety about the job they are doing.[5] They are primarily social work practitioners who have been thrust into their teaching roles with little or no training for the change. Since a large proportion of the instruction in social work training is carried out in supervision, there is a real need for systematic tools for field instructors to use in teaching and evaluating their effectiveness.[6]

Jeanette Regensburg states: "Among all the recent challenges to social work education none has been more stimulating than the widespread interest in putting order into the natural disorder of the graduate student's experience in his field work setting. Clients - whether individuals, small groups or communities - do not conform to the logical

principles of curriculum building nor do the operating procedures of a social agency, hospital, school or prison. Indeed, they need not and should not. The question then arises, since there is general acceptance that the learning experiences provided through field instruction are essential to the achievement of the objectives of the social work curriculum, of how to select, order and provide those experiences in the best interests of the student."[7]

The modern systems approach to instruction offers an answer to this need. It gives focus to instruction and to learning. The basic elements of an instructional systems model are objectives, criterion levels of learner performance, learning activities, and evaluation and revision procedures.[8] Using this approach, field work is thought of as a course for which objectives can be identified, content selected, and learning opportunities planned.

This practicum was designed to introduce and evaluate the effectiveness of a modern systems approach to social work field instruction. It is an experiment with an innovation in field learning and teaching which addresses three major problems in field training which have been identified by social work educators. These are 1) integrating classroom and field work instruction; 2) providing an equal opportunity for basic field learning for all students; 3) promoting increased independence for the student in his own professional learning. It is necessary to examine these three problems in order to understand how the systems approach provides a viable solution to them.

First, schools and agencies used for field placement have always been confronted with the problem of how to integrate class and

field learning.[9] The literature of social work education reflects constant concern with gaps between class and field learning.[10] There is a dynamic quality in field instruction that makes a systematic and orderly progression of student learning experiences difficult to attain. Yet there is content from classroom courses that students need to incorporate on a behavioral level. Since supervisors are generally not familiar with the specific content being taught to their students in classes, they cannot choose learning incidents to help students relate class and field learning. The systems approach would enable field instructors to teach material in the field in the same orderly progression as is done in classes. It can be used to identify content and help the student integrate theory with practice.

The second problem is how to provide an equal opportunity to all students for minimum basic field learning. Since students are placed in many diverse social agencies for field training, their opportunities vary widely. If the same basic units of instruction are available to supervisors in different agencies to suggest content for field teaching, then all students will have similar chances for learning.

Third is the problem of promoting greater independence for the student in field learning. One of the limitations of the prevailing tutorial model of instruction is that it provides fertile ground for the development of an infantile hostile-dependent relationship between the supervisor and supervisee.[11] The use of systems packages encourages greater autonomy and maturity in students. They can use them to learn independently in the field, thus diminishing the likelihood of the supervisory relationship becoming a hostile-dependent one. The goal is to

decrease dependent learning and increase independent learning.

In conclusion, there is a real need for establishing a structure for field instruction designed to promote achievement of the objectives of social work professional education. This practicum is a pilot project for developing a systematized education program for social work field training which will enhance student learning and obviate the problems delineated above.

PROCEDURES

Extensive literature was reviewed in order to become familiar with new instructional principles and to implement the modern systems method. From the various models described, the individualized instruction system conceptualized by Barton R. Herrscher was chosen for use. His instructional model involves six basic steps 1) a rationale; 2) specific instructional objectives; 3) pre-assessment; 4) learning activities; 5) post-assessment; 6) revision.[12]

Using Herrscher's model, a self-contained unit of instruction (also referred to as systems package, learning unit, and module in this paper) was devised. Suggestions for topics were elicited from students and peers. Care was taken to be certain unit content corresponded to that being taught in the classroom. From the topics suggested, Biestek's principles of relationship were chosen for this learning unit because of their clarity and applicability. If it is determined that the modern systems approach to education enhances field work teaching, similar units will be constructed covering essential theories, principles, concepts and techniques basic to social work practice. This package was tested on three students and three peers to provide data for revision to develop the final unit used in the practicum. Using feedback from students and peers, the unit was revised several times and the completed package was titled, "Developing the Casework Relationship."

A module evaluation was then devised. This was specifically designed to test whether students and peers felt the systems method offered solutions to three problems frequently identified by social work educators as existing in field instruction. These problems are discussed on pages

4 and 5 of this paper.

In each self-instructional unit a pre-assessment and post-assessment is provided to measure the effectiveness of the unit in student learning. Thus, two aspects of the module were evaluated 1) effectiveness in augmenting student learning and 2) effectiveness in mitigating educational problems in social work field teaching.

A copy of the completed systems package and questionnaire are presented in the appendix. They were given to eight second-year students in the Barry College Graduate School of Social Work and four field work instructors to be worked through in the social agency. Respondents were instructed not to put their names on the tests or questionnaire in order to allow them complete freedom in giving opinions.

## RESULTS

The results of this investigation are reported in a verbal summary instead of by raw data in tabular form. The instructional module (representing the implementation of the modern systems approach to education) and questionnaire were completed by eight students in the second year of graduate social work study and by four of their field work instructors. Two facets of the module were evaluated 1) effectiveness in increasing student learning and 2) effectiveness in moderating educational problems in social work field instruction.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the self-instructional unit in augmenting student learning, scores were tabulated on the answers to pre-test and post-test questions in the unit. Only students' responses were compiled on these tests. In the pre-assessment, one point was given for each of five human needs correctly listed in question 1, one point for each of five principles of relationship in question 2, and one point for each of the four principles identified in question 3. The total number of correct answers possible for each student was 14, making a total of 112 possible correct answers for the group. To these, there were 41 correct answers given. This was a percentage of 36.6% correct answers.

In the post-assessment, one point was allotted for each of five different human needs and one point for the principles of relationship identified in question 1, making a total of ten. One point was given fo a cogent essay in response to question 2. The total number of possible correct answers for the group was 88. To these, there were 86 correct answers given. This was a percentage of 97.7% correct answers.

For the group there was an increase in percentage of correct answers given after working through the unit from 36.6% to 97.7%. This indicates that a modern systems approach to social work field instruction was extremely effective in enhancing student learning.

In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the module in reducing educational problems in field instruction, the results of the questionnaires given both students and supervisors were assessed. 100% indicated that self-contained units of instruction are useful in integrating class and field instruction by selecting and ordering learning content and experiences. 91.6% said these units offer an approach by which an equal opportunity for basic field learning is provided for all students. 100% felt the units are useful in promoting greater independence for students in their own professional learning in the field. 100% stated that similar units would help allay field work instructors' anxiety about what and how to teach by establishing a structured pattern and plan for field instruction. These findings indicate that a modern systems approach is extremely effective in alleviating educational problems inherent in field instruction.

The comments made by both students and supervisors were extremely encouraging. Attitudinal responses to the module were 100% favorable. Additional opinions were expressed such as "impressive," "exciting," "beautiful," "right on," "well organized," "stimulating," etc.

Comments written on the questionnaire were particularly inspiring. One student wrote, "I haven't had so much fun learning since I first sang the ABC's." An instructor wrote, "I haven't been this excited about anything since I got out of the Army!" Telephone calls were received from students and teachers who were not given the module asking if they could use it also. Requests were received for the development of units

on other subjects. Several instructors felt this approach offered a break-through in social work field instruction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the overwhelmingly enthusiastic response to this pilot project, it is recommended that:

1. Barry College Graduate School of Social Work adopt a modern systems approach as a rational framework for teaching in graduate social work field instruction.
2. Essential theories, principles, concepts and techniques basic to social work practice which are taught in the classroom be identified in order to develop self-instructional packages to apply them to field work.
3. The annual field work instructors seminar at Barry College focus on enabling supervisors to understand the concepts behind and prepare their own self-contained units of instruction. (It is usually necessary for teachers to build systems packages themselves before they can make effective use of similar materials prepared by others.)[13]
4. The modules developed in the seminar be tested and evaluated in the same way as the one in this practicum.
5. The instructional units created and tested by Barry College clinical faculty be compiled and used to form a nucleus for field instruction.
6. The findings of this investigation be published in order to encourage the use of a modern systems approach by other graduate schools of social work.

As a result of the findings of this practicum, several Barry College field instructors have begun using the modern systems approach. They have found it to be a valuable tool for augmenting student learning, integrating class and field teaching, offering basic opportunities to all students and promoting greater independence in learning.

It is time for social work educators to systematize field work instruction. It is time for social work to draw on modern educational principles for supervision in a disciplined manner. Utilizing new methods from the educational field is an essential - not a luxury.

NOTES AND REFERENCES


1. Barry College Graduate School of Social Work, Field Instruction Manual, 1970-71.

2. Bessie Kent, Social Work Supervision in Practice (Oxford, London, Edinburgh, New York; Pergamon Press, 1969), p. 11.

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4. Bertha Capen Reynolds, Learning and Teaching in the Practice of Social Work (New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1942), p. 143.

5. Bessie Kent, Social Work Supervision in Practice (Oxford, London, Edinburgh, New York: pergamon Press, 1969), p. 11.

6. Sheldon D. Rose, "Students View Their Supervision," Journal of the National Association of Social Workers 10, No. 2 (April 1965), 90-94.

7. Jeannette Regensburg, "Report of Exploratory Project in Field Instruction," Field Instruction in Graduate Social Work Education (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1966), p. 7.

8. John E. Roueche and John C. Pitman, A Modest Proposal, Students Can Learn (San Francisco, Washington, London: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1972), pp. 45-62.

9. Mildred Sikkema, "A Proposal for an Innovation in Field Learning and Teaching," Field Instruction in Graduate Social Work Education (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1966), p. 7.

10. Dojelo C. Russell, "The Faculty Advisor in Social Work Education," Doctoral Students Look at Social Work Education, ed. Leila Calhoun Deasy (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1971), pp. 68-86.

11. Kenneth W. Watson, "Differential Supervision," Journal of the National Association of Social Workers 18, No. 6 (November 1973); 80-88.

12. Barton R. Herrscher, Implementing Individualized Instruction (Houston: Archem, 1971), p. 4.

13. Philip G. Kapfer, "Practical Approaches to Individualizing Instruction," Educational Screen and Audiovisual Guide 47, No. 5, (1968), pp. 1-3.

# APPENDIX

MODULE EVALUATION

NAME: _____

If student, first year of graduate program _____
Are you in second year of graduate program _____

If you are a peer, are you ____
1. Classroom Instructor ____
2. Student Supervisor ____
3. Practitioner ____
What is your Educational Degree____

This self-instructional unit utilizes the modern systems approach to education and applies it to social work field instruction. It is an approach to social work field teaching in which field work is conceptualized as a course for which behavioral objectives can be identified, content selected, learning opportunities planned, and student learning assessed.

Biestek's principles of relationship were chosen for this learning module because of their clarity and applicability. If it is determined that the modern systems approach to education enhances field work teaching, similar units will be constructed covering essential theories, principles, concepts and techniques basic to social work practice.

The instructor wishes to determine whether a modern systems approach can be used as a rational framework to increase the effectiveness of teaching in social work field training. Some of the problems which have been identified are 1) integrating classroom and field work instruction; 2) providing an equal opportunity for basic field learning for students in diverse field placements; 3) promoting independence for the student in professional learning in the field.

After working through the unit, please give your responses to the following questions:

1. Do you feel that self-contained units of instruction such as the one you just completed

   a. are useful in integrating class and field instruction by selecting and ordering learning content and experiences?

      Yes ____ No ____
      Please explain answer.

   b. offer an approach by which an equal opportunity for basic field learning is provided for all students?

      Yes ____ No ____
      Comments:

c. are useful in promoting greater independence for students in their own professional learning in the field?

Yes _____ No _____
Comments:

d. would help alleviate field work instructor's anxiety about what and how to teach by establishing a structured pattern and plan for field learning?

Yes _____ No _____
Comments:

II. Can you suggest other ways that individualized instructional packages can enhance the effectiveness of social work field training?

SELF-INSTRUCTIONAL UNIT I

Approx. working time: 1 Hr.

Instructor: LOIS KROP, ACSW

Institution: BARRY COLLEGE

Course Title: SOCIAL WORK FIELD INSTRUCTION

Topic: DEVELOPING THE CASEWORK RELATIONSHIP

Target Group: SECOND YEAR STUDENTS IN GRADUATE SOCIAL WORK SCHOOL

RATIONALE

The casework relationship is the soul of Social Work. It is a major means of enabling the client to resolve his psychosocial problems. Next year you will be a paid practitioner of your profession. This is the time to sharpen your skills in relating, and learn new ones. In Social Work education we generally focus on how we can help others. It is important to realize also that learning to relate to people in a helpful manner will greatly enhance your personal relationships. As you work through this program you will discover ways to become more aware of your own behavior and thus enrich your personal life.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit, the learner will be able to:

1. Analyze the seven basic human needs presented by a client in a given casework interview using the seven guidelines laid down by Felix Biestek in "The Casework Relationship."

2. Evaluate the helpfulness of a given casework interview by identifying instances where the caseworker utilized Biestek's seven principles of relationship.

3. Assess his own behavior in an actual casework interview by pointing out instances where he met the client's needs by utilizing at least four of the seven principles of relationship.

4. Examine his own feelings concisely in less than 200 words about the importance of the casework relationship in helping clients resolve their problems.

PRE-ASSESSMENT

1. List at least five of the seven basic human needs of people with psychosocial problems, as described by Biestek in "The Casework Relationship."

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

   e.

   f.

   g.

2. List at least five of the seven principles of relationship with which the caseworker responds to the needs presented by the client as conceptualized by Biestek.

   a.

   b.

   c.

   d.

   e.

   f.

   g.

3. Record one of your recent interviews with a client, identifying instances where you used at least four different principles of relationship in response to the client's needs.

Check your answers to questions 1 and 2 with pages 3 and 6 of this unit. If you were correct on these answers, see your Field Work Instructor. If you missed these questions, work through this unit.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

It has long been recognized in the practice of Social Work that the professional relationship between the caseworker and person seeking help from a social agency is uniquely important. This relationship is essential to effective casework.

Social Workers have been enthusiastic about the necessity of establighing and maintaining a good casework relationship but they have been relatively inarticulate in explaining what it consists of. In Social Work literature the stress has been on intuitive skills in developing relationships. It has often been written that this has to be experienced to be understood - leading to the belief that there is something mystical about it.

Felix Biestek, in his book, "The Casework Relationship," clearly explains, defines and analyzes the casework relationship. He theorizes that every req uest for help from a social agency is "psychosocial." He says that, whether a client requests a concrete service or help with psychological problems, it can be presumed that he feels some kind of uncomfortable emotion. There is a pattern of basic emotions and attitudes that is common to all people who need help. Biestek says the sources of these emotions are seven basic human needs of people with psychosocial problems.

LEARNING ACTIVITY I

BASIC HUMAN NEEDS OF THE CLIENT

1. To be treated as an individual - the need to be dealt with as an individual rather than a case, type or category.

2. To express feelings - the need to express their feelings, both negative and positive.

3. To get sympathetic response to problems - the need for a sympathetic understanding of and response to the feelings expressed.

4. To be recognized as a person of worth - the need to be accepted as a person with innate dignity regardless of the person's dependency, weakness, fault or failures.

5. Not to be judged - the need to be neither judged nor condemned for the difficulty in which the client finds himself.

6. To make his own choices and decisions - the need to make one's own choices and decisions concerning one's own life. The client does not want to be bossed or told what to do.

7. To keep secrets about self - the need to keep confidential information about oneself as secret as possible.

Indicate two basic needs which each client in the following situations is expressing either verbally or non-verbally.
(See page 5 for correct answers)

1. The client who states that he feels that he is not any good, is weak and a failure in life.

   a.
   b.

2. The mother of several small children who says that since her neighbor was rejected for Aid to Dependent Children, she will probably be also and she doesn't have money to feed the children.

   a.
   b.

3. The unmarried mother who fears being condemned for her predicament but comes for help in deciding whether to have an abortion or give her baby up for adoption.

   a.
   b.

4. The foster child who is angry and upset by her natural father's abandonment of her.

   a.
   b.

5. The hostile adolescent whom the court has referred for counseling and who says he would rather be put in Youth Hall.

   a.
   b.

6. The teenager who confides to caseworker that his parents don't know it but he has been smoking pot because "all the kids do."

   a.
   b.

7. The homosexual who wants help deciding whether to "go straight" and fears caseworker will condemn her for her way of life.

   a.
   b.

ANSWERS TO PAGE 4 - The clients expressed the following needs:

1. To be recognized as a person of worth
   Not to be judged
   To express feelings
   To get sympathetic response to problems

2. To be treated as an individual
   To get sympathetic response to problems
   To be recognized as person of worth

3. Not to be judged
   To make his own choices and decisions
   To express feelings
   To be recognized as a person of worth

4. To express feelings
   To get sympathetic response to problems

5. To express feelings
   To make his own choices and decisions

6. To keep secrets about self
   To be treated as an individual
   To make his own choices and decisions

7. Not to be judged
   To make his own choices and decisions
   To keep secrets about self
   To get sympathetic response to problems

Felix Biestek states that the relationship is the soul of casework while the processes of study, diagnosis and treatment are the body. He conceptualizes seven principles of relationship which the caseworker uses to meet the human needs of the client. These seven principles are the elements of the casework relationship as a whole.

LEARNING ACTIVITY II

SEVEN PRINCIPLES IN RELATIONSHIP

1. Individualization is the recognition of each client's unique qualities and the differential use of principles and methods in assisting each toward a better adjustment. It is based upon the right of human beings to be individuals and to be treated not just as a human being but as this human being.

2. Purposeful Expression of Feelings is the recognition of the client's need to express his feelings freely, especially his negative feelings. The caseworker listens purposefully, neither discouraging nor condemning the expression of these feelings, sometimes even actively stimulating and encouraging them when they are therapeutically useful as a part of the casework service.

3. Controlled Emotional Involvement is the caseworker's sensitivity to the client's feelings, an understanding of their meaning, and a purposeful, appropriate response to the client's feelings.

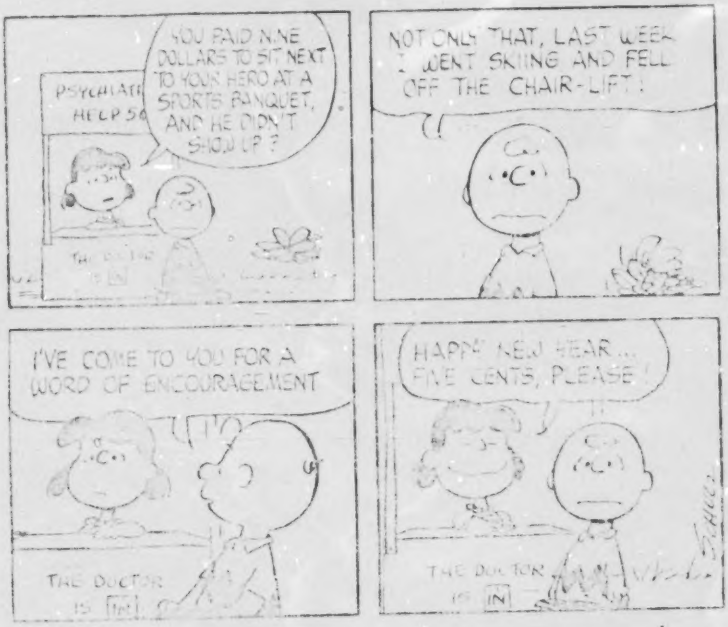
4. Acceptance is a principle of action wherein the caseworker perceives and deals with the client as he really is, including his strengths and weaknesses, his congenial and uncongenial qualities, his positive and negative feelings, maintaining all the while a sense of the client's innate dignity and personal worth.

5. Nonjudgemental attitude is a quality of the casework relationship based on a conviction that the casework function excludes assigning guilt or innocence, or degree of client responsibility for causation of his problems.

6. Client self-determination is the practical recognition of the right and need of clients to freedom in making their own choices and decisions in the casework process.

7. Confidentiality is the preservation of secret information concerning the client which is disclosed in the professional relationship.

The epitome of a caseworker offering hindrance rather than help is Lucy (from the comic strip, Peanuts). Label each cartoon with the principle of relationship which Lucy violates. (Answers on page 10.)


PSYCHIATRIC HELP 5¢
YOU PAID NINE DOLLARS TO SIT NEXT TO YOUR HERO AT A SPORTS BANQUET, AND HE DIDN'T SHOW UP?
THE DOCTOR IS IN
NOT ONLY THAT, LAST WEEK I WENT SKIING AND FELL OFF THE CHAIR-LIFT!
I'VE COME TO YOU FOR A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT
THE DOCTOR IS IN
HAPPY NEW YEAR... FIVE CENTS, PLEASE
THE DOCTOR IS IN
SCHULZ

No. 1. Principle violated:

No. 2. Principle violated:

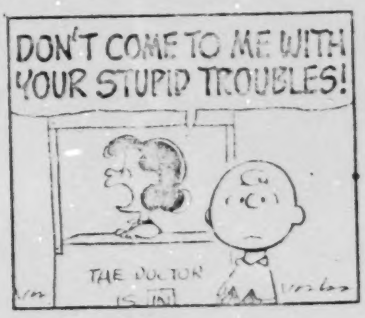
MOM WANTS TO KNOW IF YOU WANT TO GO TO CAMP
CAMP? NOT ON YOUR LIFE!
THOSE CAMPS ARE ALWAYS OUT IN THE WOODS SOME PLACE, AND THOSE WOODS ARE FULL OF QUEEN SNAKES! HAVE YOU EVER BEEN CHOMPED BY A QUEEN SNAKE?
BOY, YOU GET CHOMPED BY A QUEEN SNAKE, AND YOU'VE HAD IT! YOU WON'T GET ME NEAR ANY WOODS FULL OF QUEEN SNAKES! NO, SIR, NOT ME! I'LL JUST...
I'LL TELL HER YOU'LL BE VERY HAPPY TO GO!
AUGH!
SCHULZ

No. 3. Principle violated:

ALL IT WOULD TAKE TO MAKE ME HAPPY IS TO HAVE SOMEONE SAY HE LIKES ME...
ARE YOU SURE?
OF COURSE I'M SURE.
YOU MEAN YOU'D BE HAPPY IF SOMEONE MERELY SAID HE OR SHE LIKES YOU?

DO YOU MEAN TO TELL ME THAT SOMEONE HAS IT WITHIN HIS OR HER POWER TO MAKE YOU HAPPY MERELY BY DOING SUCH A SIMPLE THING?
YES! THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I MEAN!
WELL, I DON'T THINK THAT'S ASKING TOO MUCH... I REALLY DON'T...

No. 4. Principle violated:



YOU KNOW WHY YOUR DOGHOUSE BURNED DOWN? BECAUSE YOU SINNED. THAT'S WHY!
YOU'RE BEING PUNISHED FOR SOMETHING YOU DID WRONG! THAT'S THE WAY THESE THINGS ALWAYS WORK!
BLEAH!
HER KIND DESERVES TO BE BLEAHED!

No. 5. Principle violated:

No. 6. Principle violated:

BUT I GUESS THAT'S KIND OF SILLY ISN'T IT, CHARLIE BROWN?
NO... OH NO... NOT AT ALL..
I MEAN... WELL... WE ALL HAVE OUR LITTLE DAYDREAMS OR AMBITIONS OR WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL THEM..
I MEAN... THERE'S ONE I'VE HAD MYSELF FOR YEARS BUT I'VE NEVER TOLD ANYONE..
WHAT CHARLIE BROWN? YOU CAN TELL ME..

OH, NO ...IT'S NOT THE SORT OF THING I SHOULD TELL.. NO, I DON'T THINK I SHOULD...
OH COME ON ...I WOULDN'T GIVE IT AWAY.. COME ON..
PLEASE?
WELL.... I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO BE CALLED "FLASH"... I HATE THE NAME "CHARLIE"! I'D LIKE TO BE REAL ATHLETIC AND HAVE EVERYBODY CALL ME "FLASH"..... I'D LIKE TO BE SO GOOD AT EVERYTHING THAT ALL AROUND SCHOOL I'D BE KNOWN AS "FLASH" AND...

ANSWERS TO PRINCIPLES OF RELATIONSHIP VIOLATED.

1. Controlled emotional involvement

2. Client self-determination

3. Acceptance

4. Purposeful expression of feelings

5. Non-judgemental attitude

6. Confidentiality

The casework relationship is the dynamic interaction of attitudes and emotions between the caseworker and the client, with the purpose of helping the client achieve a better adjustment between himself and his environment. Each of the seven principles of the relationship is founded upon one of the intensified basic human needs exhibited by people who need help.

LEARNING ACTIVITY III

| The NEED of the client | The PRINCIPLE used by caseworker |
|---|---|
| 1. To be treated as an individual | 1. Individualization |
| 2. To express feelings | 2. Purposeful expression of feelings |
| 3. To get sympathetic response to problems | 3. Controlled emotional involvement |
| 4. To be recognized as a person of worth | 4. Acceptance |
| 5. Not to be judged | 5. Nonjudgemental attitude |
| 6. To make his own choices | 6. Client self-determination |
| 7. To keep secrets about self | 7. Confidentiality |

The following is an excerpt from a casework interview. After each paragraph, analyze how the client expressed at least two different human needs and with which principles the caseworker responded. (See page 13 for correct answers)

PARAGRAPH I

Mrs. L. nervously twisted her ring and dejectedly stated that she had a terrible week and was feeling miserable. Caseworker commented that she looked unhappy today and asked if she could tell her about it. Tears came to Mrs. L's eyes as she said that she has been forced to give in to her husband's every demand, no matter how irrational, because he knows a terrible secret about her past. He has convinced her that if the judge in their divorce proceedings learned about her secret, he would never let her keep their two small children. He threatened to tell her mother also. She felt "like shit" and knew that if anyone found out what she did, they would agree that she is no good also.

PARAGRAPH II

Caseworker wondered if Mrs. L. wanted to tell her what she did to make her feel so rotten. She reminded her that this would be kept confidential. Mrs. L. responded that she has been afraid to tell the worker about this before because she feared she might lose respect for her. She burst out tearfully that eight years ago, before she was married, she had a baby girl and gave her up for adoption. She went into detail about the situation and how torn up she was over having to make that decision. Caseworker listened warmly and said that she appreciated how upsetting this experience was and still is for Mrs. L. She is sure she did what was best for all concerned at the time. Mrs. L. blurted out, "You mean you don't think I'm a terrible person for giving up my baby?" Caseworker reminded Mrs. L. what a fine mother she is to her two children, and talked about her many other strengths. She certainly made her decision to give up that baby out of love for the child.

PARAGRAPH III

Mrs. L. cried bitterly and then stopped, saying she felt better now that she had told the caseworker what happened, and found her so understanding. She really did give the baby up because she felt it wasn't fair to the child to be raised under such bad circumstances. Deep down Mrs. L. had always felt that anyone who gave up a child was no good and that others would despise her if they found out. Caseworker pointed out that she knew about it now and she thought just as highly of Mrs. L. as she did before. Mrs. L. responded that if caseworker could still respect her after hearing her story, maybe she didn't have to feel so rotten and useless. Perhaps even the judge would understand if her husband told him. She didn't feel so bad about herself now or so scared about people finding out. She wasn't going to let her husband hold this over her head any more.

ANSWERS TO PAGES 11 and 12 - needs and principles are underlined.

PARAGRAPH I

1. The client's need for expression and sharing of feelings is a pertinent dynamic in this casework relationship. The caseworker helps Mrs. L. with a purposeful expression of her feelings in order to relieve the pressures and tensions she feels and thus helps her see her problems more clearly and objectively.

2. Caseworker notices the un-verbalized expression of emotions in Mrs. L.'s face, eyes, hands and posture, which help her understand the uniqueness of the client and her need to be treated as an individual. The feelings of the client are her most important individual characteristics and therefore individualization requires a sensitivity and response to those feelings.

3. The need to be treated as a person of worth and not to be judged are also in evidence here.

PARAGRAPH II

1. Mrs. L. is burdened with facts about her previous behavior which she needs to keep secret for fear that the knowledge of this would detract from or destroy her personal reputation. Caseworker assures her of the confidentiality of any secret information which the client discloses in the professional relationship.

2. Client graphically verbalizes her feelings of worthlessness and her desperate need to be recognized as a person of worth. She fears worker will "lose respect" for her. Caseworker uses the principle of acceptance by accepting the client as she actually is, with her strengths and weaknesses, positive and negative feelings, her acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

3. Mrs. L. demonstrated her need for a sympathetic understanding of and response to her problems. The caseworker listens with warmth, consciously and purposefully identifying with the feelings of the client in a controlled emotional involvement.

4. The need to express feelings is also evidenced in this paragraph.

PARAGRAPH III

1. The necessity of seeking help from an agency produces many painful feelings. One of Mrs. L.'s feelings is a need not to be judged. Clients often see the agency as a symbol of a society whose critical judgment they fear. Even if the caseworker non-verbally passes judgment on the client, he will feel it. This is one reason Social Workers have to work out their own biases, prejudices and problems before becoming helpful people. Caseworker responds to Mrs. L.'s divulgence of her secret with a nonjudgemental attitude.

2. Caseworker does not push Mrs. L. into standing up for herself against her husband and possibly the court. She lets her move at her own pace, recognizing her need to make her own choices and decisions. One feels this caseworker would have also accepted Mrs. L.'s right to continue giving in to her husband if she couldn't bear the threat of having her secret revealed. The caseworker in this way respects the principle of client self-determination.

3. The client also expresses again her need to be recognized as a person of worth.

. . . .

If you have reached this point, be proud of yourself - you are doing beautifully!

By now you are familiar with Biestek's concept of the seven basic human needs and principles of relationship. Being totally familiar with the elements of a good relationship can be a great aid toward gaining skill in the actual practice. However, understanding this conceptually doesn't guarantee skill in establishing and using it. Now is the time to apply what you have learned.

LEARNING ACTIVITY IV

Record in detail an interview you have had recently with a client. Delineate at least four instances where you have used Biestek's principles of relationship to meet the client's needs. Also note any time you violated these principles or omitted using appropriate ones.

Meet with your Supervisor to discuss this interview and your assessment of it.

LEARNING ACTIVITY V

Get together with another student or two and discuss your own feelings about the importance of the casework relationship in helping clients achieve a better adjustment between themselves and their environments. Be prepared to state your feelings about this in less than 200 words.

POST-ASSESSMENT

When you feel you have mastered the objectives of this unit, see the instructor for the Post-Test.

REVISION

The instructor would like to improve this self-contained unit of instruction based on your reactions to these questions:

1. Do you feel the material dealt with in this unit is relevant to your present or future needs? Yes _____ No _____

2. This self-instructional unit was purposely designed as a paper and pencil package. Would it have been more helpful to you to have a film tape of casework interviews as a learning activity instead of written interviews? Yes _____ No _____
Plus the written interviews? Yes _____ No _____

3. How much did you enjoy working through this unit?
A lot _____ Some _____ Little _____ None _____

4. Do you feel the material presented in this unit was presented clearly and concisely? Yes _____ No _____
If not, please go back and identify the sources of your confusion and explain them.

5. Did this unit help you to become more aware of your own behavior in professional and personal relationships?
Yes _____ No _____

6. Which statements best describe your feelings about your involvement with this learning unit?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Too easy | _____ | Boring | _____ |
| Inspiring | _____ | Helpful | _____ |
| A waste of time | _____ | Too time consuming | _____ |
| Interesting | _____ | OK | _____ |
| Just another requirement | _____ | Others | _____ |
| | | | _____ |
| | | | _____ |

## POST-ASSESSMENT

1. Analyze and evaluate the given casework interview by identifying at least five different human needs presented by the client and five principles of relationship with which caseworker responded.

Nancy is a 16-year-old girl whose family was referred to Family Counseling Service by Juvenile Court following an episode in which Nancy's older brother, Kevin, beat her so severely that he broke her nose. This is the caseworker's initial interview with Nancy.

Caseworker shook Nancy's hand warmly and they proceeded together into worker's private office. Nancy's body was rigid as she sat. She avoided engaging worker's eyes at first and nervously picked at her nails. Caseworker: "I know your family was referred by the court, but I don't know exactly what the situation is. You seem upset. Can you tell me about it?"

With great feeling Nancy replied that she was very upset and angry. She burst into a detailed explanation of how she came home at 3 A.M. one morning and found her mother, father and brother waiting for her with great hostility. She told how her mother called her a "slut" and other nasty names. She flew into a rage and began cursing her parents. Nancy then paused with tears in her eyes.

Caseworker verbally recognized that it was difficult for Nancy to tell about the incident and it was obvious she hated being called a slut. Nancy replied that she is definitely not a slut, no matter what her family says! They make her feel as if she is no good and she "might as well do it since that's what they think of me anyway." Nancy said that she had not slept with her boyfriend or anyone else, although all her friends did. Caseworker commented that perhaps Nancy was different from her friends and it was often hard to be different.

In a tight voice Nancy spoke about the pressures on her to sleep with her boyfriend. There followed some discussion of her reasons for not engaging in premarital intercourse. Caseworker supported Nancy's feelings about this, while also letting her know she would still accept her if her feelings changed. Nancy seemed relieved about this and she relaxed, saying that it felt good to know an adult who didn't consider her a "whore" because of what her parents said.

She returned to her story saying that her mother turned to her brother and said, "See how she talks to me. Why don't you do something about it?" Her brother then hit her and, with her mother's encouragement, he started to beat her up. Nancy ran to the phone and called the police who immediately came and took her to the hospital.

Nancy tearfully said this incident was typical of the fights they were constantly having at home. Only this time her brother actually beat her and she called the police. She hates her family and can't stand living at home any more.

Caseworker warmly said this was indeed a tough situation and she understood why Nancy was so upset by it. Nancy went on to talk about how miserable she was. She could not bear living at home any longer. She had a male friend with an apartment and she was sure he would take her in if she "split."

Nancy and the caseworker explored together several alternatives she had of places to go if she left home. Caseworker suggested that Nancy could also go to a foster home or an adolescent girls' group home in the community. Nancy reached the conclusion that she did not really want any of these. Maybe if she, her brother and parents all came to the agency, they could work out some of the family's problems. She preferred to live home until she graduated high school, which was at the end of this year. She simply didn't know if she could stand it. She was an A student until this year but her grades were slipping badly because of the turmoil at home.

Nancy then hesitantly said there was something she wanted to discuss with the caseworker but she "wasn't sure she could trust her." Caseworker explained that anything Nancy told her was strictly between the two of them. Nancy seemed relieved, then said, "Now I'm afraid you'll tell me I shouldn't have done it." Caseworker smiled and asked if Nancy could risk telling her to see her response. She could see it was something Nancy needed to talk about but it was difficult for her.

Nancy relaxed. By this time she was looking directly at the caseworker and no longer fidgeting with her nails. She confided that she and her boyfriend smoked pot often and there were times when they experimented with pills. The main reason she didn't want to live in her male friend's apartment was because he is a "junkie." She was beginning to see how mixed up some of her friends were from dope and she wanted to stay out of that scene. This was discussed for a few minutes.

Nancy seemed to make a decision at that point that drugs were not the answer to her problem. She said, "I have lots of problems and I know I really need help with them." Caseworker felt that Nancy could work out her problems since she was so eager to "get her head on straight." Next week they would go into the specifics of the home situation. Regular weekly appointments were set up and Nancy left seeming composed and walking as though a load had been lifted from her shoulders.

2. Examine your own feelings in less than 200 words about the importance of the casework relationship in helping the client achieve a better adjustment between herself and her environment.

1. Analysis of the foregoing interview. Human needs and principles of relationship are underlined. At least five of each must be properly identified in order to complete the unit.

At the beginning of the interview caseworker used the principle of individualization by giving the client her undivided attention, privacy and help in discussing the topic of greatest interest to her, namely, her situation and problem. Nancy was encouraged to tell her own story and to give her view of the situation. She responded favorably to the inquiry as to whether what the caseworker knows of the client's situation corresponded with the client's view of it. Nancy reacted by giving her subjective feelings which were the most important items, as well as the objective facts of her case.

Nancy showed by her posture and bodily behavior that she had a deep need to express her feelings. Caseworker recognized client's need for communication at a time when her problem was partially emotional and used the principle of purposeful expression of feelings to help Nancy express her negative emotions. Caseworker: "You seem upset - can you tell me about it?"

Nancy's behavior and the tears in her eyes gave caseworker clues about her need to get a sympathetic response to her problems. With controlled emotional involvement, the caseworker responded with sensitivity and understanding that this was a difficult problem for the client.

The client's anger at being called a slut and her defense of herself evidenced her need to be recognized as a person of worth. Caseworker used the principle of acceptance by supporting the standards of the client as a matter of reality without approving or disapproving, and she let her know that she would accept her even if her standards changed. She accepted the client's strengths and weaknesses.

Nancy expressed her need to be treated as an individual by pointing out how she differs from her friends. Caseworker individualized her by letting her know she understood how difficult it was to be different.

Throughout the interview Nancy showed by her words a[illegible] behavior her needs to express her feelings and get a sympathetic response to her problems. By using the principles of purposeful expression of feelings and controlled emotional involvement, the caseworker recognized the client's need to receive an appropriate response to her emotions.

When Nancy talked about leaving home she showed her need to make her own choices and decisions. Caseworker did not tell her what she thought she should do but helped her explore her alternatives, including available community resources. She used the principle of client self-determination to help her examine her inner resources and those of the community. She created a relationship environment in which Nancy could grow in potential and work out her own problems.

The client clearly expressed her need to keep secrets about herself when she stated that she didn't know if she could trust the caseworker not to tell her parents or the court about her drug involvement. Caseworker used the principle of confidentiality and assured her that what she tells her is between the two of them.

Nancy also evidenced her need not to be judged when she told of her fear that the caseworker would judge her guilty of doing wrong in her experiments with pot and pills. Caseworker did not label her a moral weakling but responded with a nonjudgemental attitude instead of condemning her for her mistakes and failures. This enabled Nancy to go on and make her own decision about taking drugs.